

Portuguese East Africa (24° 02' S., 34° 45' E.). 17th September, 1960. Durban Museum Expedition. In the collection of the Durban Museum.

Diagnosis: Adult male paler throughout than either *G. g. granatina* or *G. g. siccata*. Head-top and nape about Mikado Brown (*vide* Ridgway, *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature*, 1912, pl. xxix) as against a dusty Russet or Russet/Hazel (pls. xiv, xv) in *G. g. siccata*, and mantle much lighter, being Sayal Brown (pl. xxix) with greyish olive overlay. On underparts, rather less black over the chin and upper throat, and with most of the rest of the ventral surface distinctly lighter (about Tawny (pl. xv) as against Chestnut/Russet (pls. ii, xv) in *G. g. siccata*. Adult female rather paler than *G. g. siccata*, the head-top slightly more yellowish (Buckthorn Brown (pl. xv) as against Ochraceous-Tawny (same pl.). A markedly smaller, shorter tailed race than either *G. g. granatina* or *G. g. siccata*, thus: wings of 3 ♂♂ 53.5, 54.5, 54.5, 2 ♀♀ 53, 55, as against 55.5–60 (57.5) and 56–58 (56.7) in 20 ♂♂ of *G. g. granatina*, and 57–61 (58.8) and 55.5–59 (57.4) in 20 ♂♂ of *G. g. siccata*; tails in ♂♂ 62, 62, 66.5, as against 71–77 (74.7) in *G. g. granatina* and 75–82 (78.6) mm. in *G. g. siccata*.

Paratypical material: 3 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀. All adults.

Range: At present known only from the district of Inhambane, Sul do Save, southern Portuguese East Africa.

Measurements of the Type: Wing 54.5, culmen (exposed) 9.5, tarsus 16.5, tail 66.5 mm.

Remarks: The Violet-eared Waxbill appears to be extremely localized in Sul do Save, and during the course of two ornithological expeditions organised by the Durban Museum the species was only once located, when the paratypical series of *G. g. retusa* was obtained. Even in the Panda district the species was only found near one watering point.

Some of the specimens of *G. granatina* available in collections from near Lourenço Marques are referable to the nominate race, and appear to be escaped captives brought from the interior or aviary birds.

The name chosen for the new race is from the Latin *retusus*, blunted, blunt, dull, in allusion to shorter, less acuminate tail, when it is compared with the other two races of the species.

I am grateful to the Director of the Museu Dr. Alvaro de Castro, Lourenço Marques, for the loan of relevant material.

On racial variation in *Zosterops pallida* Swainson, *sens. strict.*

by P. A. CLANCEY AND J. M. WINTERBOTTOM

Received 25th October, 1960

In a recent contribution by one of us (P.A.C., 1960) the characters and ranges of two racial groups of populations of the White-eye *Zosterops pallida* Swainson, 1838, *sens. strict.* (*vide* Moreau, 1957), were defined in the light of information derived from a study of new material available

in South African museums. In the note in question the populations of the moist east were called *Z. p. pallida*, with a range in the "valleys of the Vaal and upper Orange Rivers (not in Basutoland) and their major affluents (Harts, Modder, etc.)," while those of the dry west were placed as *Z. p. deserticola* Reichenow, 1905: lower Orange River, the range of which was given by Clancey, *loc. cit.*, as "South-West Africa south to northern Little Namaqualand, Bushmanland and Kenhardt (Hartbees River), in the north-western Cape, and south-east to about Prieska and the Asbestos Mountains of the northern Cape." In the east of its range, as given, *Z. p. deserticola* intergrades with *Z. p. pallida*. The arrangement of the populations of *Z. pallida* by Clancey hinged on the accuracy of Vincent's (1952) fixation of the type-locality as Rustenburg, western Transvaal, and, unfortunately, did not take into consideration the recent change of the type-locality proposed by Grant and Mackworth-Praed (1957).

Swainson, the original describer of *Z. pallida*, states that the form "Inhabits South Africa, Dr. Burchell's Coll. No. 43", and Grant and Mackworth-Praed record that the single specimen of this species in the Burchell Collection in Oxford was taken in a grove of acacias about ten miles east of Prieska, northern Cape Province, on 18th September, 1811. On the basis of this information, the two workers concerned advocate the shift of the type-locality from Rustenburg to ten miles east of Prieska. We are in agreement with this proposal to change the type-locality of *Z. p. pallida*, in the light of which *Z. p. deserticola* must be sunk into the synonymy of the nominotypical race, while the eastern populations, *i.e.*, those of the valleys of the Vaal and upper Orange Rivers and of their major tributaries, will now require to be known as *Z. p. sundevalli* Hartlaub, 1865: *Caffraria superiore prope Vaal rivier* (Hartlaub, 1865).

Z. vaalensis Gunning and Roberts, 1911: Venterskroon, Potchefstroom, Transvaal, a form often kept specifically discrete from *Z. pallida* and *Z. capensis* Sundevall, must be placed in the synonymy of *Z. p. sundevalli*. Moreau, *loc. cit.*, expressed the view that *Z. vaalensis* is not a distinct species but simply a name given to xanthochroic variants of *Z. pallida* cropping up irregularly in the eastern populations. With this view we concur, as recent collecting in the western Orange Free State (Glen, Modder River) has revealed that *Z. vaalensis* and *Z. pallida* occur together in the same flocks, and that birds intermediate between the two forms are also to be found in such assemblages.

Literature cited:

- Clancey, P. A. *Durban Museum Novitates*, vol. vi., 2, 1960, pp. 44-45.
Grant, C. H. B. and Mackworth-Praed, C. W. *Ostrich*, vol. xxviii, 3, 1957, p. 174.
Hartlaub, G. *Journal für Ornithologie*, 1865, p. 8.
Moreau, R. E. *Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History)*, Zoology, vol. 4, No. 7, pp. 311-433.
Vincent, J. *Check List of the Birds of South Africa*, 1952, p. 99.

2473 1811
PURCHASED

